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C O N F I D E N T I A L NAIROBI 002103

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR AF/E

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TAGS: [MARR](#) [MOPS](#) [PTER](#) [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [SOCI](#) [SO](#)
SUBJECT: SOMALIA - KISMAYO ACCORDING TO MADOBE

REF: NAIROBI 2086

Classified By: Somalia Unit Counselor Bob Patterson for reasons 1.4(b,d)
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¶1. (C) Summary: In an October 4 telecon from Kismayo, Ahmed Madobe told Somalia Unit Poloff that his alliance, after having been largely expelled from Kismayo on October 1 (ref a), remained determined to fight al-Shabaab and would accept help from any forces offering to support his regional alliance. Madobe said that the Darod/Marehan in Kismayo, after the Darod/Kabalah move into the city, formed an alliance of convenience with al-Shabaab in an effort to retain some control of the port. In addition, al-Shabaab sent reinforcements to Kismayo from Merca. Madobe said that his objective was to help the Lower Juba region, which he described as having long been ignored by the TFG. Madobe told Poloff many times during the conversation that he was not working against the USG or any government in the region. Madobe, in an effort to describe his relationship with Sheik Dahir Aweys, described Hisbul Islam (HI) as multifaceted and Aweys' militia as one small faction of HI. Madobe said he has been in communication with the TFG and that his goal is a regional administration linked to the TFG. However, he said he would not, at this stage in the fight, publicly state that he has any ties to the TFG for fear al-Shabaab would use such a statement against him and cause defections from his side. Madobe asked Poloff to encourage the TFG to support his alliance's efforts. End summary.

Determined to Fight al-Shabaab

¶2. (C) Madobe told Somalia Unit Poloff on October 4 that his alliance, after having been largely expelled from Kismayo on October 1, remained determined to fight al-Shabaab and would accept help from any forces offering support. Madobe said he was waiting for reinforcements from local communities in Lower Juba and was expecting some support from other Hisbul Islam militia. However, Madobe said he is not putting much faith in HI reinforcements and is more dependent on local support. (Note: On October 5, fighting west of Kismayo resulted in a victory for Madobe's forces and several contacts are reporting that foreigners were among the dead on al-Shabaab's side. Fighting in Kismayo has reportedly caused tension between Hisbul Islam and al-Shabaab in several parts of Somalia. Some Somali media outlets on October 3 reported that Hisbul Islam said it would fight al-Shabaab across the country. End note.)

13. (C) Madobe said his forces on October 1 began to struggle when al-Shabaab sent reinforcements to Kismayo. He said that local Darod/Marehan clansmen formed an alliance of convenience with al-Shabaab in an effort to retain some control of the port. Madobe believed that the alliance between al-Shabaab and approximately 300 Marehan in Kismayo was temporary and fluid. (Note: Other Juba contacts told us on October 5 that the Marehan in Kismayo, despite being "al-Shabaab" were working with Barre Hirale's supposed TFG-Marehan based in Dolo because they all shared the same interest in Kismayo. End note.)

Regional Clan Imperative Above All Else

14. (C) Madobe said that his objective was to help the Lower Juba region, which he described as having long been ignored by the TFG. Madobe said he wants to free the region from al-Shabaab because al-Shabaab is stealing resources from the people of Lower Juba. Madobe said he wants an autonomous region because Juba has been ignored for too long. (Note: JRM Chairman Mohamed Amin on October 5 told the Somalia Unit that he and other Juba leaders think Madobe will agree to share power with other Kabalah subclans in Lower Juba but that the Ogaden clan would take the lead in any administration. Amin, though historically a rival of Madobe, is also Ogaden. End note.) Madobe opined that the Anole faction, as part of the broader Kabalah alliance, will remain committed to the fight. (Note: The Anole faction comprises Darod/Kabalah/Harti militia and was one of the first forces, reportedly hedging its bets, to pull out of Kismayo during the October 1 fighting. End note.)

"Confidential" Relationship with the TFG

15. (C) Madobe said he was in communication with the TFG in past weeks but expressed frustration that the TFG had not been in touch with him since the October 1 fighting began. (Note: A contact close to Madobe on October 5 told us he had been unsuccessful at reaching the Prime Minister on Madobe's behalf. End note.) Madobe repeatedly expressed the need for his communications with the TFG to remain "confidential". Madobe said he will not, at this stage in the fight, publicly state that he has any ties to the TFG for fear al-Shabaab would use such statements against him and cause defections from Madobe's side. Madobe said he understands that any USG support goes to the TFG but asked Poloff to encourage the TFG to support his alliance's efforts. (Note: Ogaden clan elders and Juba contacts tell us that Madobe is worried he will lose support if he is public about his communications with the TFG because the Darod/Kabalah subclan resents Abgal-clan support of the Marehan, to include past backing of Barre Hirale and Abgal President Sharif's reported support of a Marehan commander being trained by the Kenyans. The same contacts said some Juba leaders are advising Madobe not to communicate with the TFG for fear that al-Shabaab sympathizers within the TFG will leak the information. End note.)

"Complicated" Relationship with Aweys

16. (C) Madobe, in an effort to describe his relationship with Sheikh Dahir Aweys, described Hisbul Islam as multi-facted and Aweys' militia as one small faction of HI. Madobe said that other factions of Hisbul Islam, among them the Anole faction, were supporting him. Madobe said the forces currently fighting al-Shabaab in Kismayo were local Juba forces. However, Madobe stopped short of saying he would refuse support from Aweys' forces, instead reiterating that his concern was for the region. Madobe several times said that he was not working against the U.S. government, the Ethiopian government or any other government in the region. (Note: Contacts close to Madobe on October 5 told us Madobe

understands that association with Aweys is "complicated" and that Madobe is, therefore, attempting to explain the motivation of his fight with al-Shabaab in clan terms. Several contacts tell us that Aweys on October 3 received an ultimatum letter from al-Shabaab leader Mukhtar Robow that told Aweys he had to be either: 1) with al-Shabaab; 2) with the TFG; or 3) behave as a Somali civilian or it would be war between al-Shabaab and HI. Juba contacts opined that most of HI, possibly to include Aweys, is "disappearing" and will ultimately choose some form of loose linkage with the TFG. However, the same contacts opined Aweys is "clever" and will probably try to complicate any TFG - HI negotiations. End note.)

Comment

17. (C) The situation in Lower Juba remains highly fluid. We are strongly encouraging the TFG to take advantage of al-Shabaab's redeployment out of Mogadishu. Contacts told us that Madobe on October 5 blocked the road leading from Mogadishu into Kismayo. Despite Madobe's tendencies to shift with the Somali sands, the TFG may have some opportunity, through strong political outreach to Madobe from behind the scenes, to undercut Aweys' probable intention to hijack the Darod/Kabalah agenda. For the moment, there is an opportunity for the TFG and aligned and sympathetic forces throughout the country to take advantage of growing tensions between Hisbul Islam and al-Shabaab.

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